

Governor Newsom and City of Costa Mesa ramp up efforts to curtail spread of COVID-19

Governor Newsom held a press conference Sunday March 15 stepping up measures to combat the spread of COVID-19. The City of Costa Mesa urges the public and business community to closely follow these guidelines.

Key Points

It is important to focus on the highest priority needs during any emergency. At this point in time, we all need to collectively prioritize our efforts to protect the most vulnerable. This guidance provides details regarding the statewide efforts we should all employ going forward.

Protect the Most Vulnerable

- The Governor's guidelines focused specifically on the 5.3 million seniors who are vulnerable, those with chronic conditions of any age and individuals experiencing homelessness.
- The Governor called for home isolation of all seniors in the State of California for those 65 years and older and individuals with chronic conditions. The guidance is to minimize contact with others as much as possible.
- Visitation to senior facilities will be restricted further to only allow end-of-life visitations.

Reduce Contact in Public places

- All bars, nightclubs, wineries, and brewpubs are to shut down, presumably through March 31 in accordance with the Governor's public gatherings direction from March 11. The March 31 date may be extended.

- Restaurants and grocery stores can remain open, however, restaurants are to reduce occupancy levels by half and make arrangements for social distancing.
- The Governor is sharpening his focus on assisting businesses during this time through unemployment, disability insurance and through the Small Business Administration. Other resources will be explored to help businesses get through this difficult time.

What Costa Mesa is doing

- We want the Costa Mesa community to know that the City is taking strong and proactive measures to protect vulnerable populations and reduce the risk of the spread of COVID-19. It's also important to remember to prepare, check in on relatives and friends. We must also remember to show compassion toward our neighbors.
- In an abundance of caution, the City of Costa Mesa is making a major shift in our city's operations as we continue to address the COVID-19 health crisis as follows.

City Facilities closed to public

- Starting Monday, March 16 many city facilities, including City Hall and community centers, will be closed to the public. Our city leadership team is currently developing plans for the provision of essential city services and will be providing services to the public online, via telephone and through our website in order to follow the Governor's guidance and reduce the potential spread of COVID-19. The following operational changes will be effective Monday, March 16, through the end of April, or until further notice. Open space venues will remain open to the public, including parks and golf courses.
- Please know that our residents, businesses and community partners are extremely important to us. We are going to

do everything we can to help you during this difficult time. We are going to work on helping to minimize this disruption to our daily lives as much as possible. We are putting into place disaster recovery efforts to help secure disaster relief funding to the greatest extent possible.

- Our team is monitoring all federal and state resources for disaster relief. Our finance team is going to be sending instructions to businesses to assess economic damages related to this incident. This is precisely why we took the bold action to be the first in the county to declare a local emergency. Please go to the Small Business Administration for additional resources.
- Finally, know that your City leaders and public safety officials are prepared to deal with the crisis, and we are working day and night to get us through these difficult and uncertain times.

City Hall and all City facilities closed to the public due to concerns over COVID-19 virus

In response to Governor Gavin Newsom's direction regarding COVID-19, the City of Costa Mesa has closed all City facilities out of concern for public health and safety.

Essential services related to meals and social services will be available on a limited basis. Please contact the Senior Center for detailed information about access to specific

resources at (714) 327-7550 or via email cmseniorcenter@costamesaca.gov.

Community health and safety is a top priority for us and we will work to provide timely updates as they become available.

Please be patient as we work through this challenging time together.

Council ratifies City Manager's emergency declaration for Costa Mesa

COSTA MESA, CA – The City Council in a special meeting on Friday March 13 voted to both declare an urgency ordinance and ratify the decision by City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison to declare a local emergency to protect the public's health and welfare against the spread of COVID-19.

Costa Mesa was the first city in the county to declare an emergency. The county issued an emergency proclamation on Feb. 26.

"I want to assure every community member that the City of Costa Mesa is actively preparing to mitigate the impact of Coronavirus," Mayor Katrina Foley said. "For the past month, the City of Costa Mesa has been aggressively preparing contingency plans should the situation come close to home. These bold preparatory measures will keep our City safer."

As of March 13, the City of Costa Mesa has no known cases of COVID-19 and there is no community transmission of the virus in the County of Orange, according to the OC Health Agency.

“Despite not having any known cases in Costa Mesa, I took this action out of an abundance of caution,” City Manager Farrell Harrison said. “We need to assure the city employees, members of the public, business owners, visitors, local stakeholders and partners that their city leaders and public safety officials are prepared and are securing the full suite of resources to help mitigate and reduce the community’s risk.”

Based on guidance from Governor Gavin Newsom and the California Department of Public Health, the City took the bold step to order the cancellation of all non-essential meetings and functions and all large gatherings of 250 people or more.

This includes postponing or cancelling smaller gatherings that do not allow social distancing of six feet per person or involve individuals at high risk of infection, including those over 60 years of age or with underlying conditions.

Additionally, the city has cancelled special events through the month of April.

Please check the City’s web page at www.costamesaca.gov/covid19 and follow the city’s social media channels on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Nextdoor for the latest information.

Costa Mesa declares local emergency to protect public health and slow transmission

of COVID-19

COSTA MESA, CA – As the COVID-19 crisis has spread to a global pandemic, City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison has issued a proclamation declaring the existence of a local emergency in order to protect the public's health and welfare.

Based on guidance from Governor Gavin Newsom and the California Department of Public Health, the City has issued an order for the cancellation of all non-essential meetings and functions and all large gatherings of 250 people or more. This includes postponing or cancelling smaller gatherings that do not allow social distancing of six feet per person or involve any individuals at high risk of infection, including individuals over 60 year of age or with underlying conditions.

As of today March 12, the City of Costa Mesa has no known cases of COVID-19 and there is no community transmission of the virus in the County of Orange, according to OC Health Agency.

Click here to read the proclamation.

Please check the City's web page here <https://www.costamesaca.gov/hot-topics/coronavirus> and follow the city's social media channels on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Nextdoor for the latest information daily.

It is important to note that the best sources of information regarding the virus will be the county, state and federal health care agencies as this is their area of expertise. Here are links to those sites:

OC Health Care Agency

www.ochealthinfo.com/novelcoronavirus

California Department of Public Health

www.cdph.ca.gov/covid19

Centers for Disease Control

www.cdc.gov/covid19

World Health Organization

www.who.int/coronavirus

For questions, please call the Health Care Agency of Orange County at 800-564-8448 Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The County of Orange has also scheduled a virtual town hall today from 6 to 7 p.m. [Click here](#) for more information on that.

The City of Costa Mesa staff will continue to focus its continuity of government plans and ensuring we will provide core public services to the community, such as police and fire services.

Finally, the city asks If you have travelled internationally and/or had direct contact with someone who has travelled recently, or are experiencing flu-like symptoms or fall into a high-risk category please do not attend public meetings or events.

City notches one more victory for sober living home ordinance

The City of Costa Mesa achieved yet another victory in U.S. Federal District Court on Wednesday March 4 with a summary judgment against Casa Capri Recovery, an operator of sober living homes.

Judge James Selna ruled the City did not discriminate against residents of those facilities when it brought legal action to shut the group home down for operating unlawfully and without required permits.

"The Court's ruling once again validates Costa Mesa's decision to adopt reasonable rules and push back against bogus lawsuits by abusive operators who benefit financially from exploiting people suffering from addiction while also disrupting our community," Mayor Katrina Foley said. "The entire city council, and I as Mayor, remain steadfast in our commitment to protect all residents including those exploited by unscrupulous operators of sober living homes."

In February 2018, Casa Capri sued the City in federal court alleging that the City's group home ordinances were illegal and discriminated against the disabled. In granting the City's Motion for Summary Judgment as to these claims, the Court noted that Casa Capri failed to provide any evidence that its residents were disabled or handicapped or had a record of being disabled.

Likewise, Casa Capri failed to offer any evidence that the civil rights of its residents were violated by any conduct undertaken by the City. The Court also rejected claims that the City engaged in retaliation by filing a state court action to abate the illegal homes being operated by Casa Capri.

In August of 2018, the City Council unanimously approved taking the legal action against the owners and operators of Casa Capri Recovery Center and Casa Capri, LLC at 269 and 271 16th Place in Costa Mesa for maintaining a public nuisance.

Each of the Casa Capri homes consists of 14 recovery beds. The City filed the complaint after Casa Capri's requests for conditional use permits for these properties were ultimately denied by the City Council.

City staff is preparing for potential flooding and sand bags are available to residents

As a reminder as a rain storms approach Costa Mesa and the region this week, sand bags are available for free to Costa Mesa residents in the southeast corner of the City Hall parking lot at 77 Fair Drive and at Fire Station No. 4.

Only 15 bags per resident and no contractors please.

Staff will continue to monitor both locations as needed.

Both locations are self-serve, so plan to bring a shovel.

The city's maintenance service crews will patrol potential flooding spots to make sure catch basins are clear of debris and operational. Crews are also ready to respond to other weather-related incidents. Flood signs will be placed at all known hot spots.

Please report flooding issues to 714-754-5250.

Senior Engineer Shirjeel Muhammad is latest City Manager Leadership Award recipient

City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison presented Senior Engineer Shirjeel Muhammad with the City Manager Leadership Award at the monthly Meet and Greet event on Thursday Feb. 27.

“Maintaining public transportation is a big priority for our City Council and residents,” Farrell Harrison said. “I’m grateful to Shirjeel for his dedication to this important issue and his enthusiasm in getting the job done. This is a well-deserved honor.”

Muhammad joined the City’s Transportation Services Division in the Public Services Department in 2018 with over 20 years of experience working on a variety of transportation engineering and traffic signal projects.

Muhammad is currently managing several Active Transportation, traffic signal design projects, and several traffic signal synchronization projects. HE has shown excellent leadership in mentoring and training new staff in the Transportation Services Division.

The division has recently hired new staff to fill vacant positions. With the new staff joining the team, Muhammad encourages teamwork and works closely with new staff to make

sure they are trained and have a thorough understanding of transportation related tasks, design, and signal operations.

In addition, he has built great working relationships with Public Services staff in other divisions and other Departments.

His knowledge, skill level and professionalism have been evident from the time he started with the city. He enthusiastically accepts special assignments and looks for ways to improve efficiencies and processes. He responds quickly to public records requests and to risk management requests from the Human Resources Department for information related to the City's traffic signal infrastructure.

Muhammad's responsibilities include management of planning and design of capital improvement projects and the day-to-day management of the City's Transportation Management Center (TMC).

Prior to coming to Costa Mesa, he has worked for public and private sectors in California and worked abroad for several years for the Government of Qatar in Middle East. Muhammad graduated from NED University of Engineering and Technology in Pakistan with a degree in Civil Engineering. He also holds a Master Degree in Transportation Engineering from California State University, Long Beach.

In addition, City Manager Farrell Harrison welcomed several new employees and congratulated three on their promotions.

Jennifer Avila is the new Video Production Aide in the City Manager's Office and Destiny Andrews and Michael Sniezak are a new Interns working in the Development Services.

Nikki Johnson is the new Code Enforcement Officer working in the Fire Department and Arianna Centeno is the new Community Services Leader II working in the ROCKS program at Balearic.

Benjamin Morrison is one of the new Lifeguards working at the Downtown Recreation Center, and Vincent Legaspi is the new Range Master for the Police Department.

In Public Services, Salem Afeworki is the new Energy & Sustainability Services Manager, Iris La is the new Assistant Engineer working in the Transportation Division in Public Services and Mathew Limon is the new Equipment Mechanic II working in the Maintenance/Fleet services, Ramin Nikoui is the new Assistant Engineer also working in the Transportation Services and Seung Yang is the new Principal Civil Engineer working in the Engineering Division.

Those receiving promotions include Elise Price, who has been promoted to Community Services Leader III and Kevin Stoddard has been promoted to Recreation Supervisor in the Parks & Community Services Department.

Finally, Kevin Henderson has been promoted to Lead Equipment Mechanic for the Maintenance Services Division.

Judge removes Monday court hearing regarding temporary restraining order from calendar

In light of the federal government filing a notice with the court that it no longer plans to place COVID-19 infected Diamond Princess passengers at Fairview, the Honorable U.S. District Judge Josephine Staton has removed a hearing on the matter that was scheduled for Monday March 2 at 2 p.m.

The City will notify the public if there are any other legal proceedings regarding this case.

Federal government abandons plans to use Fairview for Diamond Princess COVID-19 positive passengers

COSTA MESA, CA – In a stunning late development, the federal government has filed a notice with the court that it no longer plans to place COVID-19 infected Diamond Princess passengers at Fairview.

“This is a victory for the citizens of Costa Mesa and Orange County,” Mayor Katrina Foley said. “But the government has not promised not to place future infected persons there, so the battle is not over. We will continue to ask the court to prohibit the government from using this completely inappropriate facility for housing people infected with a highly communicable and potentially fatal disease.”

At the direction of United States District Judge Josephine Staton, the City of Costa Mesa met Thursday Feb. 27 with state and federal agencies to attempt to obtain answers to key questions about how the Fairview Developmental Center can safely serve as an isolation site center for asymptomatic COVID-19 positive individuals.

Numerous questions remained after the three-hour meeting,

resulting in the city seeking answers to additional questions regarding the scientific and medical basis for the selection of this site. The City and the state and federal agencies' report on the outcomes of the meeting will be available on the City's website at costamesaca.gov.

"After the three-hour meeting, we didn't feel any closer to understanding the safety, security or patient plans for FDC and local hospitals in Orange County," said Costa Mesa Mayor Katrina Foley. "The majority of our 120 written questions, plus verbal follow up, were not answered with any specificity of the criteria used to select this non-military base site," she added. "We continue to question medical treatment plans, public health, public safety, the adequate infrastructure of the Fairview Development Center, from seismic safety to mechanical systems, as well as the cost to the taxpayers of Costa Mesa to protect our first responders and our community. Unlike all other 5 existing sites, this center is located in a densely populated neighborhood within walking distance to soccer fields, shopping, the fairgrounds and other major tourist destinations. We also question why the CDC is refusing to follow its own established effective scientifically based protocols requiring home isolation. This protocol protects everyone."

Judge Staton scheduled a hearing for Monday March 2 at 2 p.m. to hear from the parties, and to decide whether to leave her temporary restraining order in place.

The City filed legal action last week against the State of California after it learned federal and state officials were planning to use the Fairview Development Center to house and isolate individuals who have tested positive for the COVID-19 virus but do not require hospitalization according to CDC protocols.

"Throughout this ordeal, our top priority is the safety and security of this community and those who live in this region,"

said the mayor. "We continue to be troubled by the lack of information from the agencies we all need to trust to keep us safe. While the risk of infection is low, this is an international public health emergency and we need answers."

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Additional information about the City's legal filings are available at www.costamesaca.gov as well as the City's social media channels: Facebook @CostaMesaCityHall, Twitter @CityofCostaMesa.

City Manager appoints Police Department veteran Bryan Glass as the new Costa Mesa Police Chief

City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison is pleased to announce that acting Chief Bryan Glass will be the City of Costa Mesa's new Police Chief.

"Acting Chief Glass has been a consummate professional from the first day I met him," Farrell Harrison said. "He is highly regarded within the Police Department rank and file. He will be a guiding force in the Police Department as he embodies the crucial leadership qualities we need in the city's team such as creativity, teamwork, responsiveness and innovation. Working with Bryan during the past four months has been a pleasure and I look forward to what he will bring to Costa

Mesa and the region in the coming years.”

Mayor Katrina Foley expressed her strong confidence in Chief Glass.

“I’m pleased with the decision to promote Acting Chief Bryan Glass to be our new Costa Mesa Police Chief,” Mayor Foley said. “Over the last four months Chief Glass has shown he has what it takes to effectively run a police department. He understands the budget and needs of his department as well as the community. The leadership team as well as our rank and file respect him. He works collaboratively and is responsive to residents. His leadership during the COVID-19 situation demonstrates he is ready. What our department needs most right now is stability. Chief Glass can bring stability back. I look forward to working with him in his new role.”

Glass has served in the Costa Mesa Police Department for 24-years. He was originally hired by the department in October 1995 and attended the Orange County Sheriff’s Academy. Chief Glass graduated from the academy in March 1996 and began his career as a Costa Mesa Police Officer.

“I am proud of the exceptional work and services provided by the members of the Costa Mesa Police Department,” Chief Glass said. “It is an honor to be part of this department and I am grateful for the trust, confidence, and support City Manager Farrell Harrison has given me in the opportunity to be the next Chief of Police for the Costa Mesa Police Department.”

“The department is focused on responsiveness and providing quality services to the community,” he said. “We are progressively addressing multiple infrastructure projects and succession planning that requires stability and consistency for success.”

Chief Glass said one of the highlights in his career has been being a part of the team responsible for rebuilding the department after cutbacks and retirements. Over the last five

years, the department has increased its number of police officers and professional staff and strengthened specialty assignments.

Key leaders from the Police Department were happy with the news.

"The Costa Mesa Police Management Association would like to thank City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison for promoting Bryan Glass to Chief of Police," said Lt. Ed Everett, the president of the association. "Chief Glass has a working knowledge of the issues the community and the department are facing. The management association is excited and knows Chief Glass will be progressive in his approach and will keep the department moving in a positive direction. He has the support of the management staff as the department moves forward in addressing city wide issues."

The leaders of the Costa Mesa Police Association echoed that confidence in Chief Glass.

"We would like to congratulate Chief Glass on his promotion," said association President Officer Jerad Korte. "We are excited to continue serving the City of Costa Mesa and developing the future of the Costa Mesa Police Department under the accomplished leadership of Chief Glass."

In September 2015, Chief Glass was promoted to the rank of Captain. He was assigned as the Support Services Division Captain, overseeing the Investigative Services, Records & Evidence, and Telecommunications Bureaus. In December 2018, he became the Field Operations Division Captain, where he oversaw the Patrol Services, Field Operations

Administration, and Traffic Safety Bureaus. Since his promotion to Captain, he oversaw the department's SWAT team.

Prior to his role as Captain, Chief Glass was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant in January 2010 and was assigned as the

Field Operations Administration Lieutenant. This was followed by assignments overseeing the Telecommunications Bureau, Patrol Services – Area 2 Command, and Professional Standards Bureau. He also served as the SWAT Commander for a time.

His prior roles were as a Sergeant assigned to Patrol Services until being selected as the Chief's Adjutant and Department Press Information Officer. As an Officer, Chief Glass had the opportunity to work a variety of assignments throughout the department. Those assignments included Patrol Services, Gang Unit, SWAT, Master Police Officer & Field Training Officer, Area 2 Problem Oriented Policing Officer, Narcotics & Vice Detective, and Property Crimes Detective.

Chief Glass is also a veteran and he served five years in the United States Marine Corps and was stationed at Marine Corps Air Station Tustin, in Tustin, Calif. During his enlistment, he was deployed twice to Okinawa, Japan and once to Somalia, Africa for Operation Restore Hope. In September 1995, Chief Glass was honorably discharged at the rank of Sergeant.

Chief Glass has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Social Science from Chapman University, a Master of Science in Emergency Services Administration and a Master of Public Administration degree from California State University Long Beach. He is also a POST Command College graduate.

He begins his new role as Police Chief effective immediately.

Judge agrees to extend

temporary restraining order preventing the State and Federal Government from moving infected Novel Coronavirus patients to Fairview Developmental Center

COSTA MESA, CA – A federal judge today ruled that a Temporary Restraining Order preventing the State and Federal Government from moving infected Novel Coronavirus patients to Fairview Developmental Center should be extended for a week, directing the parties to meeting and confer and giving the city an opportunity to present more information.

“We are grateful that the judge saw through the inconsistencies in the federal and state positions, and has extended the restraining order to see if the government can comply with its own protocols for quarantine and isolation of people with serious, communicable and possibly deadly disease., Mayor Katrina Foley said. “While we have nothing but compassion for those who are suffering from this virus, the health and welfare of our community is our top priority. Bringing those infected into this densely populated area is simply the wrong approach.”



The city requested and was granted a temporary restraining order last Friday by the Honorable U.S. District Judge Josephine Staton, after the city learned that federal and state authorities were considering moving between 30 to 50 infected individuals to Fairview.

City officials contend that transporting persons infected with or exposed to the Coronavirus to any place within Costa Mesa until an adequate site survey has been conducted would be irresponsible. In addition, the city contends the populations of Costa Mesa and surrounding communities puts these infected patients in a much too-densely populated area.

The city contends that any designated site that has been determined suitable for this purpose will need all necessary safeguards and precautions put in place, and the public and local government informed of all efforts to mitigate risk of transmission of the disease.

The City still has not received critical information needed to keep the public safe and to be an effective partner in responding to any emergency arising from the use of Fairview to isolate Coronavirus patients.

Information needed by the city includes:

- The identities of the lead agencies, their roles, and

the incident commanders for each agency; operational details of how FDC will be used: when it is expected to begin operations as an isolation location, how long it is expected to be used for this purpose, will the site be expanded, what is the maximum number of patients to be housed, will the number of buildings used on site will change over time, and whether state and federal agencies have considered or identified overflow sites.

- The city is also requesting how information will be shared among the different levels of government, how requests for resources and mutual aid will be made, how media and public inquiries will be handled, and how emergencies will be communicated.

- The city is requesting general safety information that first responders need to be aware of how far the Coronavirus can travel, how far it can be transmitted by airborne means, whether there will be physical barriers preventing access to Fairview, how tall and secure those barriers will be, how far they will be from the buildings and publicly accessible areas, and how the facility will be guarded.

- The city also wants to know the conditions of the facilities and plans to maintain and repair them given the aging and obsolete infrastructure. The City also must know how will the housing, feeding, and movement of Fairview support personnel happen, when will patients be moved on and off the facility, what the testing procedures for patients includes, and protocols for removal to local hospitals, if necessary.

Judge Grants City of Costa Mesa's Request to Halt Use of Fairview Developmental Center As COVID-19 Quarantine Facility

COSTA MESA, CA – Within hours of the filing of an injunction designed to halt plans to use the Fairview Development Center as a COVID-19 quarantine facility, a federal judge granted the City of Costa Mesa's request and placed a temporary restraining order on this effort until a full plan has been vetted and shared with the city. A press conference is scheduled for 3 p.m. today.

The City of Costa Mesa filed legal action Friday against the State of California and various federal agencies after it learned that federal officials were planning to use Fairview to house and quarantine individuals who have tested positive for the COVID-19 virus.

The restraining order prevents transportation of anyone infected with or exposed to the coronavirus anywhere in Costa Mesa before the Monday hearing at the federal courthouse in Santa Ana at 2 p.m.

"We learned late Thursday that patients could begin arriving as early as Sunday," said Costa Mesa Mayor Katrina Foley. "Filing this injunction was the only way to halt the process to allow everyone in Costa Mesa and Orange County to understand the plans in place to protect the patients as well as our community and the region."